

**ORIGINAL**

Before the  
**Federal Communications Commission**  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**RECEIVED**

**MAY 20 1996**

**FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
OFFICE OF SECRETARY**

In the Matter of )  
 )  
Implementation of Section 203 of )  
the Telecommunications Act of 1996 )  
(Broadcast License Terms) )  
 )  
47 C.F.R. Sections 73.1020 and 74.15 )

MM Docket No. 96-90

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

TO: The Commission

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

**Comments of the  
National Association of Broadcasters**

The National Association of Broadcasters ("NAB")<sup>1</sup> submits these comments on the Commission's *Notice of Proposed Rule Making* concerning implementation of the changes in broadcast license terms mandated by Congress in the Telecommunications Act of 1996.<sup>2</sup>

Although it was perhaps unnecessary for the Commission to seek public comment before putting the changes made by the Act into effect,<sup>3</sup> NAB supports the Commission's proposals.

The Commission (*Notice* ¶ 7) proposes to grant renewals of all broadcast licenses in the ordinary course for eight years. As the Commission notes (*Notice* ¶ 6), this is consistent with the Commission's unbroken practice since passage of the Communications Act of ordinarily granting

---

<sup>1</sup> NAB is a non-profit incorporated association of radio and television stations and broadcasting networks. NAB serves and represents the American broadcasting industry.

<sup>2</sup> Pub. L. No. 104-104, 110 Stat. 56 (1996).

<sup>3</sup> In 1981, the Commission used a simple order to put into effect legislation that lengthened broadcast license terms using language substantially identical to that included in the 1996 Act. *Amendment to Section 73.1020 of the Commission's Rules: Station License Period*, 88 FCC 2d 355 (1981).

No. of Copies rec'd  
List ABCDE

*QJ10*

license renewals for the full term permitted. Second, as the Commission also recognizes, it reflects Congressional intent. The Joint Explanatory Statement of the Conference Committee on the Telecommunications Act described the House bill as amending section 307(c) “to provide for a seven year license term *for all broadcast licenses*.” Joint Explanatory Statement of the Committee of Conference at 48 (emphasis added). The Committee went on to say that “[t]he conference agreement adopts the House provisions but *extends the licence term for broadcast license to eight years for both television and radio*.” *Id.* at 48-49 (emphasis added). Thus, Congress contemplated that the statutory language it adopted would result in the Commission regularly granting eight-year licenses to broadcasters.

The Commission also proposes to treat all broadcast stations alike and not establish separate terms for different classes of stations. *Notice* ¶¶ 8-10. Again, this is consistent with the Commission’s established practice and with the legislative history quoted above that evidences Congressional intent that the terms of all broadcast licenses be extended. Further, NAB agrees with the Commission that the convenience of both the Commission and of licensees would be served by continuing the practice of tying the terms of translator station licenses and the licenses for auxiliary and booster facilities to the terms of the broadcast stations that they serve. Since questions rarely arise concerning the renewals of those licenses that are distinct from issues relating to the main station license, any different approach would simply increase the number of filings that broadcasters would have to prepare and the Commission have to process, without providing any identifiable benefit to the public.

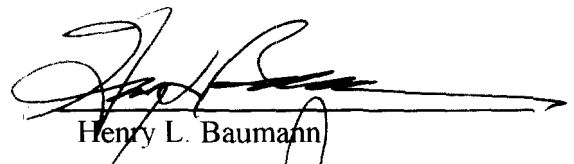
Finally, NAB agrees that the flexibility granted the Commission under the Telecommunications Act permits it to modify existing licenses for which seven-year renewal terms were already

granted to bring all radio license terms once again into a synchronized renewal schedule. The synchronized approach to station license terms that the Commission has followed for many years allows the Commission to predict its staffing needs with greater precision. Further, it is convenient for the public since all of the stations that serve a market will generally come up for renewal at the same time. Thus, if there are issues concerning several stations, they may be raised at one time. Further, for each station that would be affected by this proposal, the Commission has recently reviewed its record and determined that the public interest would be served by granting its renewal application, and there is no reason to believe that the one-year extension the Commission proposes would generate any question not already addressed before the current license renewal was granted.

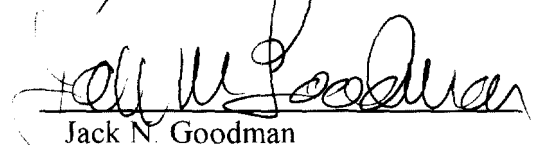
NAB supports the Commission's proposals and believes that they are well within the Commission's established authority to organize its own processes to maximize efficiency.

Respectfully submitted,

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
BROADCASTERS  
1771 N Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
(202) 429-5430



Henry L. Baumann



Jack N. Goodman

*Counsel*

May 20, 1996